

ONE of Washington's innumerable official reports the other day ran on in a statistical way to the effect that more money was spent last year for motion pictures and garages than upon mere dwellings.

The findings in general will bear out the observation of the average individual, who may have been led to wonder, if he is of a wondering turn of mind, just how it is that there are so many new roofs to shelter motion picture patrons and so few to offer refuge to the individual who wants to find reasonably priced living quarters.

Architects, whose talk is without animation when it is upon the subject of home building—a field which they claim has been distinctly unremunerative to the profession for several years—are afire with enthusiasm when they talk about plans for moving picture palaces. High costs of building and labor seem to have had no terrors for the builders who provide nice, dry and ornate places for patrons of the drama of misspelled captions.

Perhaps a sign blossoms on a vacant lot, and the passing householder pauses and exclaims as he adjusts his glasses: "Here is where, the landlord trust is going to find unpleasant reading!" But instead of the announcement that a ten-story apartment will be erected on the lot, he finds that the sign is concerned with the largest, handsomest, best ventilated motion picture theater in the world, which will soon bring delight to the dwellers in the immediate vicinity and cause them to forget such minor and universal discomforts as crowded and expensive living quarters.

Or perhaps the passerby may see workmen attacking the walls of a group of old dwelling houses or apartments, from which renters have been compelled to move. He will learn that, instead of a new apartment building, the inevitable motion picture theater is to be built—just a trifle larger, more ornate and better ventilated than the one just completed. Such a theater cuts both ways, for it not only occupies space and consumes the time of labor which might be devoted to buildings for residential purposes, but it takes away from the limited supply which the rent-paying public had available. One motion picture palace in Brooklyn occupies space which was formerly taken up by a score of rather old-fashioned houses which had been converted into tenements and from which the occupants were dispossessed.

Time was then the construction of a new theater in New York or any other big city was something worth extended and varied comment. It had page pictures and descriptive stories in the newspapers, and the architects and decorators were sure of much commendatory comment—free of all charge. People took Sunday afternoon off to show the family the new theatre in process of construction, and the star or company that had the privilege of opening the playhouse won fame that was supposed to be deathless.

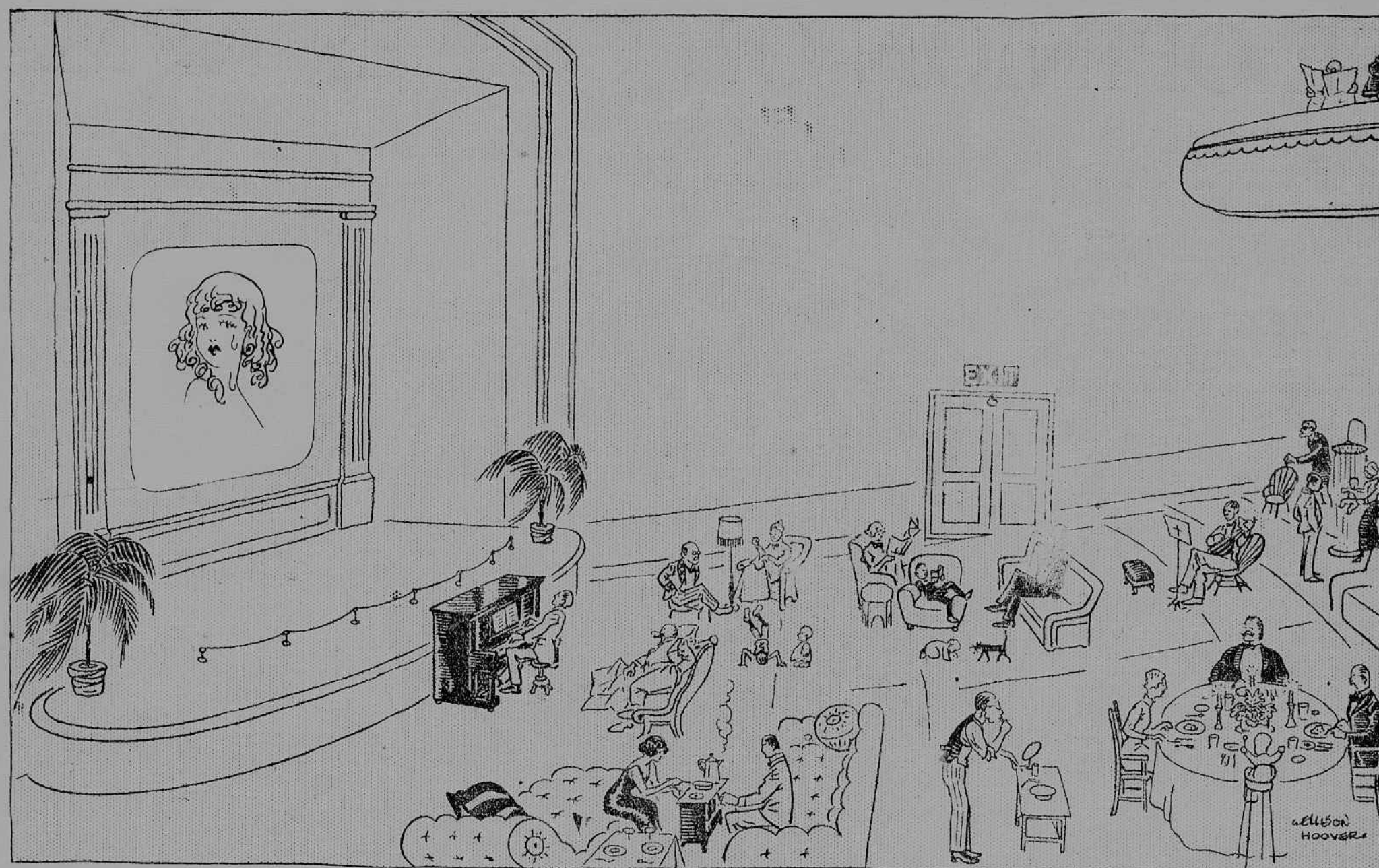
But to-day nobody pays any attention to the beginning, completion and dedication of motion picture playhouses in which the largest of the old theaters could be lost. In these great buildings are organs which cost many thousands of dollars. In the old days such organs would come in for detailed advance description, and somebody like Guilmant would be secured for the dedicatory playing. But to-day the house organist slides into his seat at the opening hour and begins the grim business of pursuing the heroine and villain through the changes of the film—a pursuit that leaves countless unfinished tunes gasping out their lives and which makes the organist wish that no composer would write anything that lasted longer than one minute and eight seconds in the playing.

Architects, as pointed out, have profited by all this motion picture theatre building, yet they seem to have overlooked their opportuni-

HOME MEANS MOST ANYTHING

By ARTHUR CHAPMAN

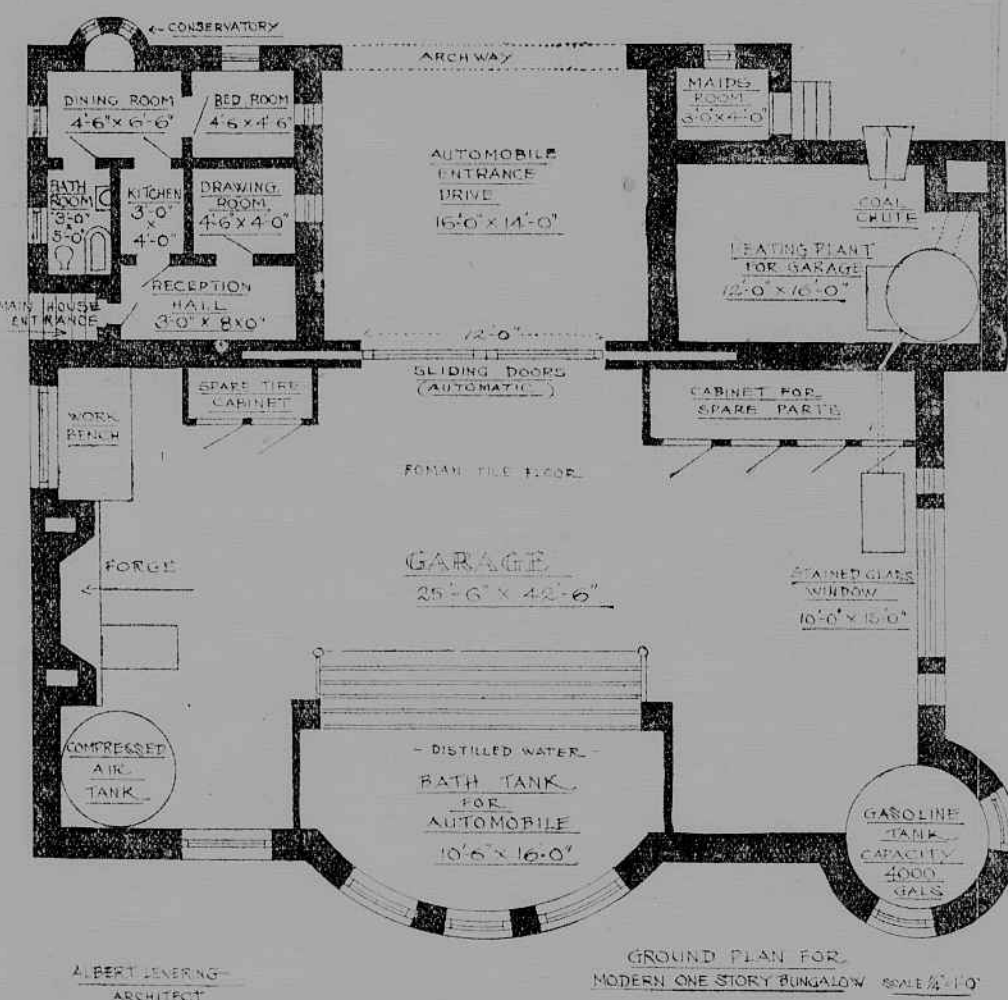
Illustrations by ELLISON HOOVER and ALBERT LEVERING



Home life in the not distant future, when the architects have caught the knack of combining the motion picture theater and the apartment house so that one will not have to leave his cosy little nest in order to see the latest film

ties of becoming public benefactors in a double sense. With the house shortage and motion picture house plethora bringing forth sarcastic comparative reports from Washington, it would seem that some architect who is indeed a friend to man might evolve a theater which will combine all the attractions of the cinema auditorium with the comforts which are supposed to be part and parcel of the home. A neighborhood playhouse with a community kitchen and with little domestic nooks scattered about the main floor would make it impossible for commentators from Washington to sow broadcast further figures, set down in sarcasm, showing the disparity of new home roofs with the roofs over new theaters. For the combination motion picture theater and apartment house would have to be assessed at its domestic as well as dramatic value. Here would be quiet scenes of real home life, staged in the restful half light of the movie auditorium. While a family ate it could see two or three reels of that sweet little drama, "Downcast Eyes." The head of another household could glance up from his evening paper now and then as he lounged on his favorite davenport and could catch the drift of the play as it flowed along on the screen. At midnight "taps" could be blown and the renters fortunate enough to have leases in the combined movie and home could go to their sleeping quarters, expeditiously and silently created by partitions cunningly hidden in walls and floor.

But, just because no architect rose to his opportunities and provided such a combination of home and movie, the statisticians at Washington have waxed as sarcastic as



Ground plan of ideal garage-dwelling combination. The space devoted to the garage may seem disproportionately large, but it's surprising how little room people can get along with when they really try

they pleased in their roofage comparisons.

In one respect, however, their report seems to have done an injustice to a large and growing element in the community. In assuming that all garages have been built solely for the purpose of housing automobiles, the statisticians have overreached themselves. Also they have hardly played fair with those economical youngsters, Mr. and Mrs. Garage Dweller, who have nobly done their share toward mitigating present discontents by keeping house in the premises officially dedicated to cars and spare tires.

The Garage Dwellers are mostly young folk who have turned their garages into living quarters until they feel that the time has come when they can go ahead with those larger building plans. They bought a nice plot of ground just before the skyrocket-roman candle-pinnacle era of finance. They have a full set of blueprints of a house they were going to build. When lumber and labor and everything else went up in such uncontrollable fashion they found it impossible to go ahead. Instead, they have turned to the ranks of those who have converted their garages into dwellings—a much larger class than those who have turned their swords into plowshares, if anybody, in the language of "The Subway Sun," should ask you.

Inspired by the example of those who have moved into garages that were intended to be nothing but auto barns, others have taken up the domestic idea in a more deliberate way. In fact, they have gone into it so deliberately that a garage building license nowadays never knows whether to take itself seriously or as a joke. Also, the average set of garage building plans is subjected to

changes, in the interests of the new domesticity, which tend to rob said plans of much of their motor character. Bedrooms, living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms are squeezed into the plans here and there. Guests have even been known to be informed that their sleeping quarters will be in the car itself, where there has been rigged up one of these automobile beds, commonly used by those tourists who go every year from Keokuk, Iowa, to one of the national parks, camping en route.

In these deliberately planned garage dwellings the owners are prepared to live until the cost of building comes down, even if it takes a matter of twenty years. In fact, architects have a haunting fear that the garage life will so grow on these people that the plans for the big houses never will be dusted off, and that the coming generation will be so used to eating off the raising-board of the family car and making one's toilet at a mirror propped up on the hood that living in the ordinary dwelling will be scorned.

"I know of a young couple in Pelham," mused one New York architect, "who are living in their garage and have parked their machine out under a tree, but most people manage to stow themselves in among their machines some way. And this living in out-buildings is by no means confined to young people who are just starting out in the world and who are tiding themselves over a temporary monetary stringency until they can build a \$10,000, or maybe a \$20,000, house. Not at all. It has hit the owners of many potential estates all the way from New York to California. I know of one architect who thought his fortune was made when he landed the job of fixing up a big estate owned by a man near Chicago. It was to be a job running close to \$400,000. It has progressed to the outbuilding stage, and no further. The owner is living in his gardener's cottage. It is a nice enough house for anybody, so far as mere living is concerned. It cost probably \$25,000. But it is far from being the mansion that the owner had in mind and that is still in the blueprint stage. Talk about a downcast architect—say, he could write a song called 'The Blueprint Blues' which would out-blue any piece of musical bluing turned out so far in Tin-Pan-Alley!"

"Then there are some social drawbacks that go with this garage-dwelling scheme. The people who are living in their garages are mostly in restricted districts. The question comes up—when is a garage a dwelling, if ever? The question even got into court in Long Island not long ago. One of the garage-dwelling couples had fixed up their temporary home very nicely, with window boxes and real lace curtains and all those things. But they couldn't disguise the fact that they were living in a garage in a highly restricted district. So, when it became evident that their garage life was going to continue indefinitely, some neighbors had them brought into court, charged with violating the prohibited building restrictions which applied to the district. The court decided that the rules of the game ought to be suspended in times like these, to give everybody a chance to get along as best they might, and the young people were discharged, but they have suffered almost complete social ostracism ever since. They are gaming it out—but it hurts!"

These are just some sidelights on the cold figures given out at Washington by the investigators of the nation's housing problem. But enough has been shown to indicate that not all garages are to be taken at their facade value, but are to be classed as homes, while many motion picture theater owners might, with the right spirit of co-operation on the part of their builders, help in the housing crisis by adding to their electric signs this extra-illuminating line:

FILMS AND APARTMENTS ON VIEW.

ON THE 12th of January, 1206, an old monk, shut in his white cell, was seated on an oaken stool before an inclined desk. In order to see more clearly he had pushed his desk and his seat nearer the window. For hours he had sat there, bent over a sheet of vellum, dipping his goose quill carefully into the pewter inkstand, slowly painting the words and stopping while he wrote to consult the double ivory tablets on which with a lead stylus he had traced his notes. His page was finished. He opened the window. The low roofs of the city, shining from the rain, lay in stages below him, on the north side of the hill as far as the river, whose tumultuous yellow waves he could see. Heavy clouds rolled across the sky and the rain fell steadily.

The monk shook his head. "These things have lasted for eleven years," he said. "Thy wrath, O Lord, weighs heavily upon us."

But as an author, despite all external miseries, is always interested in what he has written, he returned to his desk and re-read the new page:

"The poor city of Paris, completely inundated, is shaken to its foundations. One can cross the streets and places only by boat. Most of the houses are already carried away. Those which remain standing, weakened by the continual shock of the waters, are threatened with collapse. The stone bridge, which they call

THE MIRACLE OF THE BRIDGE

By EDMOND HARANCOURT

Translated by William L. McPherson

the Little Bridge, can no longer resist the thrusts of the waves. There are enormous cracks in it. It may fall at any moment. The rich city, the queen of cities, is plunged in gloom. The priests groan; the souls of the nuns are filled with grief. Paris succumbs under the weight of her sorrow and no one can console her."

He crossed himself.

"No one but thou, O Lord, to whom nothing is impossible, and by whose will all things happen. The page isn't bad."

He put it fondly into a drawer. Then, his daily task being finished, he descended to the cloister, for it was the hour for exercise.

"Have you heard the news, Brother Ambroise?"

The monks, two by two, circulated under the arcade, their forearms across their stomachs, their hands hidden in their sleeves. Some groups walked very slowly, thus manifesting their meditative spirit. Others, on the contrary, walked very quickly, thus expressing their state of exaltation and using up their combative energy.

"News? No one has told me anything." "The legate of the Holy Father has arrived from Rome. He has traveled through many provinces. Disaster is everywhere. Earthquakes shake the mountains and the plains. The rivers have left their courses, the fields

are overflowed, the cities are crumbling away. Streams, transformed into torrents, carry off the trees and the farmhouses. But our misfortunes are not at an end, for the crops cannot be gathered and a year of famine is ahead of us."

"Are we, then, going to see, as we did last year, human creatures dying by the thousands? O Lord, are we going to see corpses disinterred in the cemeteries and people tearing shreds of flesh off them? Are we to see families hiding the bodies of their dead and dividing them among the survivors?"

"The scourge of God! God lays this curse on the people of France, which has deserved His wrath. The Pope tells us that. The Holy Father has formally declared that our miseries will last as long as the cause of them lasts."

"What cause?"

"The King's sin—his abominable persistence in sin."

"It is thirteen years since our master, King Philippe-Auguste, cast off his wife, Ingelburge of Denmark, to marry Agnes de Méranie. Rome has vainly launched the thunder of its paternal menace. Even excommunication has had no effect. The heavens are angry and have intervened. It was to be expected. It is justice."

"It is well," said Father Ambroise. "It is

just that the sheep suffer from the crime of the shepherd. Only divine mercy can put an end to the miseries of the poor people. Only the patron saint of Paris can intercede in favor of her city. We must ask her to plead our cause."

"Father Ambroise is right."

"The patroness who saved us long ago from the invasion of the barbarians will not refuse to guard us again in this time of mortal peril. And since our order bears her name it belongs to us, my brethren, to speak to Saint Geneviève."

Father Ambroise had closed his eyes in order to reflect with greater serenity. Finally he reopened them and said:

"I believe I see the remedy which will bring results. The saint has deigned to enlighten me. Let us organize here a procession, at the head of which we shall carry the relics of our patroness. We will descend to the Seine. From the top of the Little Bridge we will oppose the coffin, as a dike, to the fury of the waves. The watery element, however raging it may be, will retire into its bed and Paris will be saved. So be it!"

They discussed the matter. The procession was decided upon.

On the day set, and at the hour set, the saint's coffin was carried to the church door. To the sound of hymns, which the clerics in-

toned, the immense frame appeared under the porch, resplendent with jewels and surrounded with candles. At the sight of their palladium the throng knelt in the mud, and a huge sigh, born of distress and hope, rose from the prostrate mass. The whole city was there. Not a single unbeliever had absented himself. Each group had its own place. The parishes, the religious communities, the trade corporations, in great pomp, with their standards and banners, took their positions in the order which their hierarchical status decreed, and the cortege got under way.

With slow steps, rumbling and singing, under the cold winter rain, the procession descended the hills. It directed itself toward the heart of Paris, down there where, on the Isle of the City, Our Lady the Virgin, warned by the cathedral bells, awaited the visit of the saint who was coming to implore her aid. The last ranks of the faithful were still intoning at the top of the hill when the head of the cortege reached the river. In front of the throng the Little Bridge trembled upon its piles and the roaring waters, stirred up by thousands of devils, whose scaly backs and black horns one could see now and then, rushed to the assault.

"It is here that the decisive battle is to be delivered between our Protectress and the scourge!"

"Holy Virgin, have pity on us!"

"Saint Geneviève, succor us!"

"She advances upon the bridge! The devils

"Does she hesitate, O Lord?"

"The holy saint of Paris is brave. She stops only to fight, not because she is afraid."

"She resumes her march."

"Halleluia! She has passed over!"

The news, spread from mouth to mouth, mounted the slope.

"Geneviève has passed over. The victory is hers. Now that she is with the Virgin, her request will be heard. Paris will be saved. Halleluia! Halleluia!"

The Te Deum which mounted from Notre Dame soared to heaven. All the bells in all the bell towers emitted their brazen clamors. The clouds trembled. You might say that invisible wings, flying through them, tore them apart in passing. But they lagged. The downpour redoubled. It didn't last long, however.

"A miracle! A miracle! They are conquered. The rain stops!"

When the ceremony in the church was ended and when the coffin frame, for the second time, passed over the bridge a ray of sunlight fell on it. From between the parting clouds the pale ray glided to earth, and to a few elect it was given to perceive it. But it was the response of Heaven. And the whole city understood the promise of the luminous Word.

"Geneviève has repassed the bridge! She is on the left bank!"

"Mon Dieu, the bridge has given way behind her!"

"You see that it was she alone who sustained it!"

"The devils are vanquished! They confess their defeat, since they avenge themselves! A miracle! A miracle! Paris is saved!"

And the river, in fact, sagely reentered its bed.